

IOWA BIRD LIFE



Vol. XXXIII No. 1

March 1963

Published by the

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

THE 1962 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

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The observations of 220 birders at 22 stations, including a few who participated in more than one count, are shown in the tabulation of the 26th Christmas Bird Census in Iowa. The number of species reported, 94, is the same as in the past two years, and has been exceeded only in 1957 when 98 species were seen.

There were no "firsts" this time, but Myrtle Warblers were found at Clinton, Des Moines, and again in Cedar Rapids where the only previous observation was in 1953. This was the third year in which Barn and Snowy Owls, Brewer's Blackbirds, and Savannah Sparrows were reported. In general, the reports show an absence or reduction in the numbers of some of the winter visitants frequently seen. There were no Saw-whet Owls, Evening Grosbeaks, redpolls or crossbills, and the Carolina Wren, which had become established here, is also missing after nine consecutive recordings. Only 124 Bald Eagles were reported which is a reduction of 42 from last year's count. (Probably due to the fact that the Savanna Ordnance Depot was not covered this year. ed.).

One or two Brown Thrashers have been recorded with fair regularity in past years, but this time seven individuals were seen at five stations. Red-winged Blackbirds and Common Grackles have been reported almost every year, but usually as stragglers or small flocks. The Brown-headed Cowbird made its first appearance in 1955, and has been reported in five of the past seven years, also in small numbers. This count finds Iowa City and Des Moines with immense roosts with estimates of thousands of Starlings, grackles and cowbirds. The Iowa City roost also included an estimated 400 Brewer's Blackbirds. Similarly, Davenport had a heavy concentration of Starlings and Red-winged Blackbirds.

1. ALEDO, ILL. (Same area as last year). Dec. 30; 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Temp. 20° to 30°; wind 2 m.p.h., E. Clear, light snow, streams mostly frozen. Observers (20) in 5 parties: Wendell Bergstrom and son, Lewis Blevins, Dale Dickinson, Elton Fawks, Carroll Greer, Lanny Greer, Marty Greer, May Greer, Richard Greer, Rodney Greer, Theodore Greer, Dr. Nellie Marsh, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Petersen, Jr., Earl Tomlinson, Linda Trial, Robert Trial, Robyne Trial, Mike Yeast.

Mockingbirds observed at feeders. Lincoln's Sparrow and Sapsucker observed by Lewis Blevins. Fox Sparrow observed closely by Fawks party. Richard Greer and Wendell Bergstrom had good view of Brown Thrasher. Bohemian Waxwings observed feeding on cedar berries in group of Cedar Waxwings.

2. BACKBONE STATE PARK (roadsides in northern Buchanan County, and western Delaware County). Dec. 23; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 8° to 10°; strong north wind. One-half inch of snow on ground. Clear part of the day. Observers (3) in one party: Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Jones, F. J. Pierce.

3. BURLINGTON (15-mile diameter circle, center at Flint Hill Golf Course, including part of Iowa Ordnance Plant, Crystal Lake, in Illinois, and Lock and Dam 18). Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 28° to 19°, falling; wind 15-20 m.p.h. from NNW. Clear, one inch snow, Mississippi River 90% frozen. Observers (19) in 5 parties: Mrs. E. E. Barker, Jim Barker, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Bjork, Mrs. H. B. Eastburn, Jim Eastburn, Mrs. Lowell Fuller, Freda Haffner, Mrs. Iona Helm, Kenneth Homan, Mr. and Mrs. Frederic Leopold, Harold Linder, Mrs. O. J. Lowther, Peter Lowther, Jack McLane, Mrs. Paul H. Niemann, Clarence F. Schneider, Mrs. Gerald Thye.

4. CEDAR FALLS (Snag Creek, Black Hawk Park, Wyth Park, Beaver Creek). Dec. 22; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 31° to 26°; wind 8 m.p.h. from NW. Cloudy with one inch snow, ponds frozen, river largely open. Observers (3) in one party: Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays, Florence Spring, with Mrs. L. W. Bireline, Jean Martin and Ray S. Matala at feeders.

5. CEDAR RAPIDS (Cedar Lake, Shaver Park, City Waterworks, roadsides to Linn Junction, Ellis Park and road north, Cedar Rapids Nursery, Bever Park, road south along Cedar, roads southeast). Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 15° to 20°; wind 26 m.p.h. from NW. Cold, hazy, light snow cover. Observers (17) in 4 parties: Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Atherton, Seddie Cogswell, Dr. Harold Ennis, Dr. K. E. Goellner, Mr. and Mrs. Beryl Layton, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Liljedahl, Lillian Serbousek, Mrs. Dayton Sippy, Jud Strickland, Tim Thomsen, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane, Robby Vane, Myra Willis.

Myrtle Warbler seen at 30 feet in good light by Dr. K. E. Goellner and Mr. and Mrs. Atherton, and identified by bright yellow rump patch.

6. CLINTON (7½-mile radius from Elk River Junction, as in previous years). Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 5° to 15°; wind 6 m.p.h. from WNW. Clear, ground covered with 2 to 4 inches of snow, river 99% ice covered. Observers (7) in 2 parties: Mrs. Ross King, Fred Leshner, Rev. Maurice Leshner, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Petersen, Jr., David Rose, Mike Yeast.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet, female, seen at 20 ft. in good light (PP Jr.), eye-ring clearly seen. Myrtle Warbler, immature seen in excellent light (RK, Mr. and Mrs. PP, DR) with all field marks noted. Vesper Sparrow closely observed in good light (FL, MY) with streaked sides and white outer tail feathers noted. Snow Bunting, flock seen by all observers in good light with all field marks noted.

7. DAVENPORT (7½-mile radius of toll house of Memorial Bridge, as in previous years). Dec. 23; 5:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 8° to 14°; wind 15-30 m.p.h. from WNW. Clear, ground bare, river 75% ice covered. Observers (32) in 16 parties: Steve Aupperle, Carl Bengstrom, Lewis Blevins, Harry Carl, Larry and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dau, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Dau, Dale Dickinson, Leo Doering, Elton Fawks, Tom Frank, Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Frink, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Gold, Dick Greer, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Petersen, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Peter Petersen, Sr., Don Price, Frank Rodl, Clifford Simpson, Conrad Sindt, Kent Stewart, Wm. Stienhilber, Joey Tracey, Bob Trial, Norman Ward, Mike Yeast.

Golden Eagle, one immature, seen (HC) in good light both perched and in flight, with feathered tarsi and black tail-band noted. The other, adult, was seen flying overhead in good light (EF, DG). Ruby-crowned Kinglet, seen at 2 feet (NW) eye-ring carefully noted. Bohemian Waxwing, flock seen in good light with a flock of Cedar Waxwings (NW). Field, Fox, and Lincoln's Sparrows, all seen at close range by careful, competent observers with all field marks noted.

8. DECORAH (15-mile circle centered NE corner Sec. 24, T 99, R 8W, 4 routes: Bear Creek, Twin Springs, Bluffton, Pinebluff). Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 0° to 8°; wind 15-25 m.p.h. from NW. Sunny and very bright, 6 inches snow on all slopes. Observers (29) in 4 parties: Florence Albright, David Anciaux, Becky Brooks, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cote and Paul, Mary and Lisa, Bob Daubendick, Mrs. V. A. Edwards, Mary Faldet, Mrs. H. P. Field, Gregory Grant, Mr. and Mrs. Gus Heuser, Cletus Houdek, Oivind Hovde, Darwin and Mr. and Mrs. Verne Koenig, Mabel LaFleur, Marilyn Matter, Arlo Raim, Mr. and Mrs. Arold Rohm, Gregory Schrubbe, Mr. and Mrs. Roy Schultz, Ann Taeger.

9. DES MOINES (Glendale and Pine Hill Cemeteries, Dove, Brown's, Crocker, and Denman Woods, Sycamore, Ashworth Parks, Margo Frankel Woods, Dale Maffit Reservoir, Flint Acres Access.) Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 10° to 16°; wind 10 m.p.h. from NNW. Clear, 3 inches snow on ground, ponds and rivers frozen. Observers (9) in 4 parties: Mrs. A. J. Binsfeld, Mrs. Dwight Brooke, Woodward H. Brown, Mrs. Lester W. Haskell, Joe Kennedy, Richard D. Mooney, Dr. and Mrs. Harold R. Peasley, Mary Ellen Wartens.

Myrtle Warbler identified (JK, RDM, WHB) in same place as the observation of a flock of 7 (AJB) a week earlier. One of Brown Thrashers seen regularly all winter in yard (MEW).

10. DUBUQUE (Linwood and Mt. Calvary Cemeteries, City Island, City Harbor, Dubuque's Grave Area, Eagle Point Park, Mississippi River sloughs in Wisconsin.) Dec. 22; 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 31° to 34°; wind 10-18 m.p.h. from W. Heavy overcast, light, wet snow falling last 5 hours, river open one-half mile below the dam. Observers (6) in 1 party: Gail Blaser, Frieda and George Crossley, C. O. Johnson, Phyllis Shultz, Anna Walton.

Snowy Owl seen twice near the city dump; four hours later it was seen three miles north on the river ice. There may have been more than one.

11. ESTHERVILLE (15-mile circle with Estherville as center—Ft. Defiance State Park, Hale's and Kattleson Sloughs, Swan, Big Spirit, Marble, Welsh, West and East Okoboji, Center, Pleasant, Four Mile, High, Ingham, Ryan Lakes). Dec. 20; 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 20° to 30°; wind 0-5 m.p.h. SW. No snow, cloudy, all lakes frozen. Observers (2) together: Mrs. B. A. LaDoux, Mrs. J. B. Osher.

Savannah Sparrow followed and seen repeatedly, yellow eye stripe and other field marks clearly seen. Ruby-crowned Kinglet, eye-ring and lack of color on crown observed.

12. GOLDFIELD (15-mile radius centered on Goldfield). Dec. 29; 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Temp. 21° to 32°; wind 21 m.p.h. from S. Clear, ground bare. Observer, Dean Roosa.

13. IOWA CITY (15-mile circle, including Iowa City, Lake Macbride, Coralville Reservoir and west). Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 10° to 15°; wind 15-20 m.p.h. NW. 2 inches old snow, rivers, ponds and lakes frozen. Observers (10) in 4 parties: Wm. Hageboeck, Norman Hageboeck, M. L. Huitt, R. L. Hulbary, F. W. Kent, Dr. T. H. Kent, Dr. P. P. Laude, Dr. and Mrs. Max Pepernik, W. M. Weld.

Mockingbird in yard of Mrs. Louis Penningroth since October.

14. LAMONI (parts of a 15-mile diameter circle centered 2 miles east of town, farm land, roadsides, woods, farm yards, Graceland College Campus, Nine Eagles Park). Dec. 27; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 10° to 30°; wind 3 m.p.h. W. Clear and sunny, 1 inch snow on ground, streams frozen. Observers (8) in 4 parties: Madeline Ballantyne, Mrs. W. C. DeLong, Jimmy and J. Donald Gillaspey, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph E. Silver, Mike Silver, Cecil Teale.

Mockingbirds seen near multiflora rose hedges on Bob Oiler and Gillaspey farms.

15. LEHIGH (10-mile radius centered on Lehigh). Dec. 25; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Temp. 2° to 18°; wind 6 m.p.h. S. Partly cloudy to clear, 1 inch new snow. Observer, Dean Roosa.

16. MUSCATINE (7½-mile radius of Lock and Dam 16 as last year). Dec. 22; 6:45 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Temp. 30° to 35°; wind 10-20 m.p.h. WNW. Overcast, snow, sleet and rain after 10:30, ground bare, river 60% ice covered. Observers (4) in 2 parties: Elton Fawks, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Petersen, Jr., Mike Yeast.

Golden Eagle, observed with 20X scope, dark band at end of tail noted (EF).

17. PINE HOLLOW (Various county roads from Farley to the Forest, and thorough coverage of the Preserve). Jan. 1; 7:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. Temp. 20° to 30°; wind 6 m.p.h. SE. Overcast with 4 inches old snow. Observer: George Crossley.

18. SHENANDOAH (Points within a 15-mile diameter circle, centering as in previous years at Farragut, including the Riverton area). Dec. 30; 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 18° to 30°; wind 3-5 m.p.h. SW. Sunny, clear, scattered patches of old snow. Rivers, creeks mostly frozen, spring-fed streams open. Observers (6) in 3 parties: Mrs. Robert I. Bordner, Mr. and Mrs. Francis M. Braley, Don Burrichter, Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Vaughn.

19. SIGOURNEY (7½-mile radius). Dec. 28; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 17° to 34°; wind 15 m.p.h. S. Fair in a.m. to cloudy in p.m. 2-3 inches snow on ground. Observers (5) in 3 parties: Mr. and Mrs. K. Dale Horrom, Mr. and Mrs. Forrest Millikin, Walter Voltmer.

20. SIOUX CITY (same as last year). Dec. 30; 8 a.m. to 5 m.p.h. Temp. 7° to 27°; wind 10 m.p.h. SW. Clear, cold, patches of snow on ground, most water open. Observers (10) in 5 parties: Ann Barrett, Mrs. W. W. Barrett, Mr. and Mrs. P. B. Davison, Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Kirkpatrick, Mr. and Mrs. George Marsh, L. J. Nickolson, Robert L. Nickolson.

Brown Thrasher, observed by Ann and Helen Barrett at Brown's Lake at very close range.

21. WATERLOO (Sweet Marsh, Seven Bridges Park, Crane Creek, Plum Creek, Hickory Nut Grove, Wapsipinicon River Valley, and farm lands). Dec. 29; 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Temp. 12° to 20°; wind 20 m.p.h. SE. Cloudy, light snow cover, little open water. Observers (23) in 2 parties: Russell Birkhead, Myrle M. Burk, Frances Crouter, Mabel Dingsley, Harriet Fairbanks, Irva Feldpouch, Helen Fleming, Dr. Martin L. Grant, Ruth Halliday, Helen Hawkins, Russell Hays, Mabelle Hinkley, Marvel Lesch, Charles, Rodger and Tom Moon, Margaret Nagel, John, Lois, and Nick Osness, Brooks Shafer, Florence J. Spring, Ida May Wade.

Snow Bunting feeding with Horned Larks, seen by all participants. Goldeneye seen by Dr. Grant and party. Rusty Blackbirds seen by all.

22. YELLOW RIVER (N.E. cor. Sec. 8, T 96 N, R 3 W, including Prairie du Chien, Marquette, Bloody Run Creek, Andy Mountain, Paint Creek). Dec. 30; 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Temp. 0 to 15°; wind, none. Overcast all day, 2-4 inches snow, streams open, Mississippi River 10% open. Observers (4) in 2 parties: Florence Albright, Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Daubendieck, Darwin Koenig.

ADDITIONAL BIRD NOTES WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE CENSUSES.

Alledo.—The numbers of Common Snipe and Robins were unusually large. Sharp-shinned Hawk was another species seen in the period.

Burlington.—Sparrow Hawk, Purple Finch, and Pine Siskin were seen during the count period, as were some of the Wild Turkeys in the Iowa Ordnance Plant area. The ducks seen were possibly a part of a flock estimated at 50,000 seen the day after the count. Clarence Schneider, Manager of Burlington Parks, reports the count of ordinary winter birds is appallingly low, and fewer birds were seen all summer.

Cedar Rapids.—A lone Canvasback was seen on January 1.

Davenport.—Other species seen during count period were Western Meadowlark, White-throated Sparrow, and Snow Bunting.

Decorah.—The numbers of American Goldfinches and Slate-colored Juncos were up compared with last year, but only eight Red-headed Woodpeckers were found while 71 were reported a year ago. A Winter Wren was seen during the period.

CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

7

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
Blue Jay	232	6	33	24	41	74	137	117	23	11	4	5	26	40	3	42	16	21	9	4	25	18
Crow	758	15	5	58	75	140	686	117	65	51	18	75	28	20	45	75	28	600	14	50	238	14
Black-capped Chickadee	150	2	38	58	107	69	211	77	89	5	31	17	65	42	10	33	5	35	32	75	29	12
Tufted Titmouse	31	2	28	7	18	33	65	44	25	9	2	6	16	1	3	8	4	2	1	3	18	
White-breasted Nuthatch	42	5	11	32	28	8	45	45	27	12	11	6	23	14	4	6	8	8	10	8	30	14
Red-breasted Nuthatch	4	5	11	32	28	8	45	45	27	12	11	6	23	14	4	6	8	8	10	8	30	14
Brown Creeper	5	2	1	14	2	2	12	2	14	1	4	1	1	1	2	5	2	1	7	6		1
Winter Wren	3*	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2*	1	1	1	1*	3*	1	1	2	1	1*	1		1
Mockingbird	1*	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	5	1	5	1	1	1	1		1
Brown Thrasher	38	1	1	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Robin	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7	2	2	2	1	3	2	1	2	2	10	1		1
Eastern Bluebird	32	1	1	1	5	11	10	1	1	2	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Bohemian Waxwing	2*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Cedar Waxwing	222	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Shrike (sp.)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Northern Shrike	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Loggerhead Shrike	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Starling	1198	160	171	154	**	820	6812	228	16045	313	63	40	15000	107	18	745	74	416	273	1000	89	179
Myrtle Warbler	2346	100	841	182	**	1115	2737	493	3975	66	250	50	2000	430	30	1534	153	579	535	500	383	450
House Sparrow	45	2	4	4	11	19	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	26	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Meadowlark (sp.)	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Eastern Meadowlark	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Western Meadowlark	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Red-winged Blackbird	28	30	30	30	6	2267	1	70	1	99	9	1	9	1	1	11	25	32	500	7*	63	
Rusty Blackbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Prewer's Blackbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Common Grackle	3	1	1	1	3	2	2	163	4	6011	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Cardinal	453	30	59	54	82	126	120	189	77	22	1	2	84	114	2	92	16	24	27	40	38	30
Purple Finch	21	1	1	1	3	6	3	36	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Pine Siskin	204	18	15	10	10	75	9	68	14	3	1*	5	4	8	8	4	4	39	5	4	15	
American Goldfinch	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Savannah Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Vesper Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Slate-colored Junco	1507	35	541	119	314	778	697	371	310	67	33	30	269	384	38	124	94	231	211	300	275	247
Tree Sparrow	2006	100	12	215	189	560	726	396	483	15	246	18	745	503	8	303	145	538	155	700	596	132
Field Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Harris' Sparrow	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
White-crowned Sparrow	14	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
White-throated Sparrow	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Fox Sparrow	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Lincoln's Sparrow	4*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Swamp Sparrow	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Song Sparrow	47	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Lapland Longspur	30	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Snow Bunting	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		
Number of Species	66	18	33	33	42	44	72	39	34	29	26	23	47	30	32	37	24	36	25	32	31	29
Number of Observers	20	3	19	3	17	7	32	29	9	6	2	1	10	8	1	4	1	6	5	10	23	4

Total Iowa List. 94

* See data under station in body of article
** No estimate made of number in flocks seen

Dubuque.—Sparrow Hawk and Pine Siskin are two additional species seen, but not on the day of the count.

Estherville.—Robin was another species present during the count period.

Lamoni.—Some of the northern birds just have not appeared here this winter. Shrikes noticeably less numerous, both last winter and this. Had Lapland Longspurs and Snow Bunting until about December 10, none since. Marsh Hawk and Bobwhite were seen during the period.

Shenandoah.—The 5,000 tabulation of Mallards is a very conservative count, and the number seen was unusually large for this season.

Sigourney.—Two additional species were Yellow-shafted Flicker and Robin.

Yellow River.—No Wild Turkeys observed, but many dog and fox trails through the best of the turkey area.

Eldon J. Bryant, on the afternoon of December 24, and the morning of December 25, made a count 10 miles east of Akron. Birds seen in the total of three hours were: Peregrine Falcon, 1; Ring-necked Pheasant, 15; Mourning Dove, 2; Great Horned Owl, 1; Long-eared Owl, 2; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 10; Horned Lark, 61; Blue Jay, 7; Crow, 10; Black-capped Chickadee, 5; Starling, 14; Meadowlark, (sp) 11; Slate-colored Junco, 57; Tree Sparrow, 116; Song Sparrow, 2. Other species seen during the census period were Red-tailed Hawk, Marsh Hawk, Short-eared Owl, and Brown Creeper. Mr. Bryant commented on the total absence of Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, and mentions the Peregrine Falcon is very rare there. The one he reports was seen in good light at about 150 yards, and all identifying marks were noted.

Emmett and Edith H. Polder, on December 28 from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., made an 18-mile trip along the North Fork of the Maquoketa River between Dyersville and Cascade. They observed the following: Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Ring-necked Pheasant, 1; Mourning Dove, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 1; Red-headed Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Horned Lark, 28; Blue Jay, 4; Crow, 102; Black-capped Chickadee, 3; Tufted Titmouse, 2; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Starling, 164; House Sparrow, 220; Rusty Blackbird, 1; Common Grackle, 8; Brown-headed Cowbird, 3; Cardinal, 9; Slate-colored Junco, 21; Tree Sparrow, 4; Song Sparrow, 1. One Common Grackle, one Brown-headed Cowbird, and the Rusty Blackbird appeared to be injured. According to Mr. Polder they have not had a single chickadee at their feeders this winter where six or eight fed in previous years, and other residents of Dyersville and Guttenberg report similar scarcities.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold B. Brown and Michael B. Kennett, on the afternoon of December 25, made a three-hour trip from Grundy Center to Eldora and Steamboat Rock, a distance of 62 miles. The following were seen: Red-shouldered Hawk, 2; Rough-legged Hawk, 3; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 3; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 2; Horned Lark, 5; Blue Jay, 16; Crow, 25; Black-capped Chickadee, 7; White-breasted Nuthatch, 2; Starling, 42; House Sparrow, 70; Cardinal, 12; American Goldfinch, 14; Slate-colored Junco, 40; Tree Sparrow, 28. During the census period Sparrow Hawk, Ring-necked Pheasant, Tufted Titmouse and Rusty Blackbird were seen also.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Pierce, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Pierce, Vicki Pierce, and Sandra Pierce covered roadsides in Buchanan and Delaware Counties, including Backbone State Park to Forestville, on the afternoon of December 25 and reported these observations: Red-tailed Hawk, 4; Rough-legged Hawk, 2; Marsh Hawk, 2; Ring-necked Pheasant, 21; Short-eared Owl, 1; Hairy Woodpecker, 2; Downy Woodpecker, 3; Horned Lark, 150 plus; Blue Jay, 4; Crow, 22; Black-capped Chickadee, 7; Tufted Titmouse, 2; White-breasted Nuthatch, 3; Brown Creeper, 1; Golden-crowned Kinglet, 1; Starling, 100 plus; House Sparrow, 135 plus; Meadowlark (sp), 7; Red-winged Blackbird, 14; Cardinal,

15; Purple Finch, 20; Slate-colored Junco, 125 plus; Tree Sparrow, 41. (Mr. F. J. Pierce also took part in the Backbone State Park count, q.v.)

Floyd W. Van Ohlen, with Ben Taylor, Ronald Janes and Fred Johnson, covered the Whitham farm west of Fairfield, Evergreen Cemetery, and territory to, and including, Waterworks pond No. 1, on December 31 from 2 to 4 p.m. This report includes, Mourning Dove, 3; Barred Owl, 1; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1; Downy Woodpecker, 10; Blue Jay, 1; Crow, 8; Black-capped Chickadee, 13; White-breasted Nuthatch, 7; Starling, 10; House Sparrow, 61; Cardinal, 19; Slate-colored Junco, 30. A Mockingbird was seen the week before.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Keenan covered an area of 8 miles radius centering 3 miles southwest of Ogden, on December 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. The temperature was 18° to 30° F.; wind 6 m.p.h. from the SW; weather clear and ground covered with a little snow with the creek mostly frozen over. This report includes: Red-tailed Hawk, 2; Rough-legged Hawk, 1; Sparrow Hawk, 1; Ring-necked Pheasant, 15; Yellow-shafted Flicker, 1; Red-bellied Woodpecker, 3; Downy Woodpecker, 1; Blue Jay, 5; Crow, 35; Black-capped Chickadee, 11; White-breasted Nuthatch, 6; Brown Creeper, 4; Starling, 86; House Sparrow, 118; Cardinal, 3; Slate-colored Junco, 10; Tree Sparrow, 93; Song Sparrow, 1. Also seen during the census period were Tufted Titmouse and Common Grackle.

THE RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET'S NEST

MRS. W. C. DeLONG

Box 398

SHENANDOAH, IOWA

In April the Ruby-crowned Kinglet is a common spring migrant in Iowa. We find him in woods along the borders of streams, brooks, and ponds, and even in our own back yards in cities and towns. He is here, there, and everywhere—inspecting closely the best hiding places, lifting his wing as he alights, and taking short nervous flights from one bough to the next. In the spring he shows his red crown patch which suggests a glowing scarlet blossom.

I suppose all readers of *Iowa Bird Life* have the Ruby-crowned Kinglet on their life list and have even heard his song during migration in Iowa. His song, bright and happy, surprises one in its volume and richness when one realizes it is coming from the throat of such a diminutive bird. But how many of you, dear readers, have peeked into a kinglet's nest and have seen seven white eggs faintly marked with paler brown, chiefly around the larger end. This was my privilege the summer of 1961 to find a nest so low that with the aid of a mirror I could peep into the nest without difficulty.

The nest was in an alpine fir tree at the south edge of Bear Lake, Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado. It was only six feet from the ground, close to the trunk of a tree. It was semi-pensile, very bulky for such a tiny bird, thick walled, made of green moss, shreds of bark, and warmly lined with hair and feathers.

One day while sitting on a rock watching the kinglets bring food to the young, my attention was attracted to the song of a Lincoln Sparrow. All of a sudden his song ended and he rushed to the distress signal of his mate. I saw his mate jump from a very low bush very much excited and alarmed.

In examining the bush to see if a nest could be nearby, I parted the branches and there was a snake coiled around the nest in the very act of swallowing one bird. Another bird had been thrown out of the nest in a puddle of water among the marsh marigolds. He was still alive and I put him back into the nest. The snake got him, however, a few days later. Just a stone's throw from the Lincoln Sparrow's nest, was the nest of a Gray-headed Junco on the ground at the base of an Engleman spruce tree. The snake never found this nest and the birds grew to maturity.

When the kinglets were eleven days old and large enough to be seen sticking their heads up above the nest, a Clark's Nutcracker appeared on the scene. The tiny kinglets did their best to force this big bird to leave the nest alone. The Gray-headed Juncos and the Lincoln Sparrows came to their rescue and even a Robin and Pine Grosbeak tried to help.

I threw rocks at the nutcracker and momentarily drove him away. Thunder, lightning, and rain forced me to leave the scene and take shelter in my car. When I came back, the nutcracker was devouring the last baby kinglet and the nest was empty.



RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET ON NEST

Photo by Dr. Alfred Bailey

A WESTERN TANAGER RETURNS

MRS. W. C. DeLONG

Box 398

SHENANDOAH, IOWA

On August 1, 1961, I banded a male Western Tanager at Bowen Woods in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado. This tanager was one of the most beautiful specimens I have ever held in my hand. The males will vary from orange-yellow on their heads and necks to a brilliant crimson. This particular individual had a most brilliant vermillion on his head, with black on his wings and tail and yellow predominating on the rest of his body.

When I released him after banding, he did not fly away as usual but grabbed my finger and hung suspended in mid-air. I remarked to Mr. Bowen, "Wish we had a camera as this would make a good picture." Just as I said these words, the tanager let go, fell to the ground, bumped his head on a rock, and lay there stunned. I picked him up thinking he was dead.

In my mountain cabin I kept him four days. A large purple bump developed on his head. He ate suet, bread, and seeds. He even tried to take a bath in the water I gave him. Each night I would take him outside to see if he could fly away. The first night he could only skim over the ground and he hid in a garage. I retrieved him and brought him back to the cage in the cabin. He did not like the cage and spent most of his time trying to get away. Each night I would let him go, but he could never raise himself from the ground. The fourth day he was very restless in the cage and I thought the swelling was not quite as large. This time he was able to raise himself to a post. Now, I knew I would never get him back and I was glad. He perched on the post a few minutes, then lifted his wings and flew to a low branch of a pine tree. Finally he flew to a higher branch.

When I came back into the cabin, I had a strange feeling when I saw the empty cage. Would he be able to get food by himself? How would he get water to drink? Would he try to fly over the moraine and go back to the Bowen Woods. And when it came time to go south, how could he ever fly to Central America for the winter? Some rodent or hawk would surely get him. It was the first accident I had had in banding birds. I banded only three more birds in the park that year.

A year later, July 1962, I was again banding birds in the same place. I had banded many Pine Siskins, catching them in a trap over what was left of a salt lick Mr. Bowen had put out for the deer early in April. Siskins, Red Crossbills, and Cassin's Finches were attracted to this salt, and it was very easy to catch them in this trap on the ground. I had already banded ninety-seven siskins and was trying for the one hundredth.

Salt is the only bait one can use with a trap on the ground. At Bowen Woods we have a trap on a steel post to catch birds attracted to seeds, bread, and suet. Chipmunks and golden mantle ground squirrels become a nuisance on the ground when using seeds. After releasing the last siskin, I turned my attention to this other trap. Yes, there was a bird in it. As I approached the trap, I could see it was a tanager. What a brilliant orange on its head! And it had a band, too. I read the number and looked up the record. I had written this notation beside the number — the injured one with the beautiful head. It couldn't be! I picked up the tanager and read the band again. No. I was not mistaken. There, I was holding the same old tanager I had had in my cabin for four days! A perfect specimen of health—no purple bump on his head—still the old fighter wanting to get away from me. He had been to Central America, no doubt, and back again to Bowen Woods in Rocky Mountain National Park. The old valiant one! He did make it after all.

This was the greatest experience I have ever had with a return on a banded bird. As I let him go, an unexpressible joy flooded my soul as I saw him rise into the air and fly away.

IOWA BIRD BANDING SUMMARY FOR 1962

DEAN M. ROOSA
GOLDFIELD, IOWA

Several new banders plus the report of the Iowa Conservation Commission helped give us the greatest number of birds banded in Iowa in one year. Iowa banders enjoyed a very profitable and exciting year in 1962. What could be more thrilling, for example, than when that lucky lawyer, Charles Ayres, and his wife caught the two Summer Tanagers; or imagine their surprise when they found the Worm-eating Warbler in their net, or the beautiful Black-throated Blue Warbler, or the Carolina Wrens. Imagine how that champion bander from Davenport, Pete Petersen, felt when he caught the

Bohemian Waxwing, Rusty Blackbird or those visitors from the North, the Saw-whet Owls. Wouldn't you have liked to have been with the Ayres or John Moeding when they captured the Evening Grosbeak? Think of holding a little Kentucky Warbler in your hand as Pete, Dr. Grant, the Ayres or Jones did; or the Bay-breasted Warbler as did Pete, Dr. Burk and the Ayres. I wish you could have all been with me when I caught a beautiful little male Prothonotory Warbler near Goldfield, the only one I've seen in this, the western part of its range. Banding is a very exciting avocation and I hope it remains a part of each of our meetings so each of you can enjoy getting a "birds eye view" of the birds.

As well as having an exciting time banding, Iowa banders are becoming more purposeful in their banding. Pete is continuing his interesting work largely at one area in Davenport, namely Pine Hill Cemetery. This should lead to some very worthwhile information in the future. Also his banding of Eastern Bluebirds, often complete families, will be a worthwhile project. Dr. Grant is continuing intensive banding in a few small areas, which should get some interesting returns in the future. Dr. Burk's study of fall plumages through banding should be of significance. John E. Wilbrecht, new manager of Union Slough Federal Wildlife Refuge, is actively banding Wood Ducks; this will be of interest as the project continues.

I would personally like to see all the banders in the state converge on one centrally located, likely banding area one weekend of the year, outside of our regular meetings, for the purpose of erecting all available nets and banding a great number of birds in one area. Not only would we enjoy the fellowship, but we might even acquire some knowledge from one another and gain useful information through the birds we band. Maybe in this way we could capture those Black and Yellow Rails and other rare birds we're sure are lurking out in the reeds instead of just dreaming of catching them. We hope to try this May 18 and 19 at Muskrat Slough near Olin—details will be sent all banders.

Following is a list of banders and the numbers of species and individuals they banded this year in Iowa.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ayres, Ottumwa. 68 species, 692 individuals.

Gladys Black, 608 DeWitt, Pleasantville, Iowa. New bander this year. 30 species, 155 individuals.

Eugene Brady, Perry. 12 species, 45 individuals.

Dr. Myrle Burk, Waterloo. Well known Sec.-Treas. of I.O.U. New bander this year. Interested in fall plumages. 42 species, 243 individuals.

Conservation Commission. First time for their report. Banding supervised by James Sieh, Biologist, Biology Station, Spirit Lake, Iowa. 8 species, 1896 individuals, all waterfowl.

George Crane, Mt. Pleasant. 46 species, 258 individuals.

Dr. Martin L. Grant, Cedar Falls. 62 species, 617 individuals.

Myrle L. Jones, Bellevue. 34 species, 120 individuals.

T. James Lewis, Davenport. 26 species, 67 individuals.

John E. Moeding, Manson. Science teacher in Manson high school. New bander this year and former student of Dr. Grant. 62 species, 679 individuals.

Carroll Oelke, New Hampton. 8 species, 39 individuals.

Peter C. Petersen, Jr., Davenport. 105 species, 2303 individuals.

Arlo Raim, 709 4th St. SW, Waverly. Student at Wartburg College. New bander this year. 8 species, 28 individuals.

Dean M. Roosa, Goldfield. 16 species, 47 individuals.

Robert Trial, Aledo, Ill. 38 species, 113 individuals in Iowa.

John E. Wilbrecht, Manager, Union Slough Federal Wildlife Refuge, Titonka. 7 species, 138 individuals.

BIRD BANDING SUMMARY

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BIRDS BANDED IN IOWA IN 1962

Pied-billed Grebe	7	White-breasted Nuthatch	67
Double-crested Cormorant	1	Brown Creeper	30
Green Heron	1	House Wren	88
Mallard	68	Winter Wren	5
Pintail	20	Carolina Wren	2
Blue-winged Teal	1028	Short-billed Marsh Wren	1
Shoveler	5	Catbird	167
Wood Duck	343	Brown Thrasher	101
Redhead	38	Robin	335
Ruddy Duck	8	Wood Thrush	13
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	Hermit Thrush	34
Red-tailed Hawk	2	Swainson's Thrush	62
Sparrow Hawk	6	Gray-cheeked Thrush	27
Bobwhite	6	Veery	11
Sora	3	Eastern Kingbird	135
American Coot	514	Golden-crowned Kinglet	40
American Woodcock	2	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	87
Solitary Sandpiper	1	Bohemian Waxwing	1
Mourning Dove	24	Cedar Waxwing	26
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	10	Starling	4
Black-billed Cuckoo	17	Bell's Vireo	1
Screech Owl	9	Yellow-throated Vireo	2
Great Horned Owl	3	Solitary Vireo	14
Barred Owl	1	Red-eyed Vireo	34
Saw-whet Owl	9	Philadelphia Vireo	3
Whip-poor-will	4	Warbling Vireo	8
Common Nighthawk	2	Black-and-white Warbler	17
Chimney Swift	6	Prothonotary Warbler	1
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	4	Worm-eating Warbler	1
Belted Kingfisher	7	Golden-winged Warbler	1
Yellow-shafted Flicker	52	Blue-winged Warbler	3
Red-bellied Woodpecker	31	Tennessee Warbler	47
Red-headed Woodpecker	17	Orange-crowned Warbler	12
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	13	Nashville Warbler	59
Hairy Woodpecker	14	Yellow Warbler	1
Downy Woodpecker	81	Magnolia Warbler	27
Eastern Kingbird	2	Cape May Warbler	3
Crested Flycatcher	13	Black-throated Blue Warbler	1
Eastern Phoebe	20	Myrtle Warbler	165
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	8	Blackburnian Warbler	1
Acadian Flycatcher	8	Chestnut-sided Warbler	12
Traill's Flycatcher	33	Bay-breasted Warbler	5
Least Flycatcher	55	Palm Warbler	8
Eastern Wood Pewee	18	Ovenbird	53
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1	Northern Waterthrush	19
Tree Swallow	1	Kentucky Warbler	4
Bank Swallow	9	Connecticut Warbler	1
Rough-winged Swallow	4	Mourning Warbler	8
Barn Swallow	8	Yellowthroat	46
Purple Martin	18	Yellow-breasted Chat	4
Blue Jay	157	Wilson's Warbler	9
Black-capped Chickadee	189	Canada Warbler	3
Tufted Titmouse	43	American Redstart	23

House Sparrow	11	Vesper Sparrow	3
Red-winged Blackbird	20	Slate-colored Junco	701
Rusty Blackbird	1	Oregon Junco	1
Baltimore Oriole	32	Tree Sparrow	93
Common Grackle	158	Chipping Sparrow	9
Brown-headed Cowbird	10	Clay-colored Sparrow	5
Scarlet Tanager	1	Field Sparrow	28
Summer Tanager	2	Harris' Sparrow	4
Cardinal	126	White-crowned Sparrow	8
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	111	White-throated Sparrow	485
Indigo Bunting	26	Fox Sparrow	109
Dickcissel	4	Lincoln's Sparrow	52
Evening Grosbeak	3	Swamp Sparrow	11
Purple Finch	86	Song Sparrow	215
American Goldfinch	204		
Rufous-sided Towhee	16	Individuals	7440
Savannah Sparrow	1	Species	138
Grasshopper Sparrow	1		

Following is a list of birds banded in the state from November 15 to December 31, 1961. The report for 1961 included only those birds banded through Nov. 15th. No species added to 1961 report, individual total brought up to 5285.

Red-tailed Hawk	1	Red-breasted Nuthatch	5
Screech Owl	1	Brown Creeper	6
Saw-whet Owl	2	Cardinal	6
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	Slate-colored Junco	34
Red-headed Woodpecker	4	Tree Sparrow	6
Hairy Woodpecker	2	White-crowned Sparrow	1
Downy Woodpecker	12	White-throated Sparrow	1
Black-capped Chickadee	27	Swamp Sparrow	2
Tufted Titmouse	3		
White-breasted Nuthatch	10	Individuals	124

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS COMMITTEE

Iowa has a variety of bird life with nearly 300 species appearing in the state with more or less regularity. Considering our inland location which eliminates the pelagic varieties, we have a lot of material for bird study. In addition, we are so situated geographically that there is always a chance of picking up a species usually found farther north, south, or west.

The Research Problems Committee has been created to encourage the membership to make such studies as would further our knowledge of Iowa ornithology. A number of projects which our members might undertake have been suggested; some are concerned with studies which members working as individuals might make, others should be on a state-wide basis with wide membership-participation.

1. There are species nesting, or suspected of nesting, about which little is known. Among these are Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Sharp-shinned, Cooper's and Broad-winged Hawks, Peregrine Falcon, Am. Woodcock, Least Tern, Barn and Long-eared Owls, Pileated Woodpecker, Tree Swallow, Bewick's Wren, Orchard Oriole, Savannah and Henslow's Sparrows. There are doubtless others which will suggest themselves. Any information regarding the nesting of these species, even occasional date and place records could be helpful.

2. More complete data on the rarer migrants are needed.

3. The rarer wintering birds, such as longspurs, Snow Buntings, and both crossbills should be recorded as found.

4. What changes in population have taken place in your area—have any new species moved in, or, conversely have any disappeared? The Tufted Titmouse and Cardinal have extended their ranges in fairly recent years, and there is evidence that the Summer Tanager is also moving northward. The Carolina Wren may not have survived after last winter's snow.

5. Annotated species lists have been prepared for only a few counties, so there is a lot of room for expansion in this direction.

6. A Distributional Check-list of Iowa Birds was printed in **Iowa Bird Life** in 1954. This is badly in need of updating, and you may now have information which was not available when the original compilation was made.

7. Some states have records of dates for the various species, such as first arrival, last departure for migrants, both spring and fall, and first and last dates for summer and winter residents. A few individuals in Iowa have such dates for varying periods of time, but it would be helpful if this information could be assembled for all parts of the state.

8. There have been a few comprehensive "status" articles published in **Iowa Bird Life** and many of the studies suggested would furnish material for more of these.

9. In addition to the Christmas Bird Counts, **Audubon Field Notes** annually publishes results of Breeding-bird Censuses and Winter Bird-population Studies, but Iowa has made surprisingly few contributions to these. There should be more from this state.

Many of us are in the field whenever the opportunity presents itself, and most of us keep records of some sort. Even hit-or-miss, random birding is fun, but the incentive to go out is greater, and the pleasure is immeasurably enhanced if there is a definite end in view. The satisfaction gained by making a contribution to our knowledge of the birds of the state can be very great. If you can do anything along the lines suggested, or in similar directions, please send your findings to Dean Roosa as Chairman, Research Problems Committee.

SUMMARY OF 1962 NEST RECORD CARDS

The first year of the Iowa Nest Record System produced small but noteworthy results. About 375 cards were requested and mailed and 104 Iowa records were submitted. These represented 31 species of songbirds, gamebirds, and raptors. Nests of robins and mourning doves were best represented but some less common nests were those of Bell's Vireo and Turkey Vulture. Data were carefully recorded and all contributors can be proud of the results.

Those who wish to cooperate during 1963 can obtain cards by sending a postcard indicating the needed **number** to Milton W. Weller, Department of Zoology and Entomology, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

SIoux CITY CONVENTION

The forty-first annual convention of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union will be held at the Commons, Morningside College Campus, Sioux City, Iowa, May 10-12, 1963. All sessions Friday and Saturday will be in the Commons. Meals in the cafeteria or Snack Bar will be available to all those registered at the convention. (The cafeteria is not open to the public.)

Early breakfast before Saturday and Sunday field trips will be served at the Palmer House Motel Restaurant on Highway 20. Sunday the convention headquarters will be moved to the Izaak Walton Club House on Brown's Lake, where the noon luncheon will be served. All members are welcome to use the Club House at any time Sunday. An earlier time—11:30 A.M.—is being set for lunch, with the business meeting at 12:30, in view of the long homeward miles to eastern Iowa. It is planned to arrange trips into Nebraska and South Dakota on Saturday morning, reserving Iowa territory for Sunday.

The Sioux City Bird Club, playing host to the I.O.U. for the fourth time in its long history, has traditions of hospitality to meet, as well as the standard of excellence in "anniversary observation" set for it by the Cedar Falls Audubon Society last spring. The Club needs the presence and help of every I.O.U. member to make this meeting a success. At the Commons Friday evening, May 10, the "Westerners" will be waiting, eager to greet you, to ply you with plans, conversation, coffee and cookies. To emphasize the anniversary theme, Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson, Morningside graduate of 1912, whose interest in all phases of wildlife was fostered by Dr. T. C. Stephens, is to be the banquet speaker. In the intervening years, "Gabe" has had an illustrious career spent wholeheartedly in the interests of conservation. He is president of the Wildlife Management Institute of Washington, D.C. To give background support to "Gabe", the Sioux City Bird Club is striving to have as many charter members present as possible. This presents difficulties, since the six whose addresses are known are scattered from Alaska to Vermont. Also as atmosphere and for the enjoyment of those curious about birding fifty years ago an historical exhibit is being arranged.

The more formal part of the program, which will be held after the Saturday morning field trip and during the afternoon, will consist of some very interesting and educational subjects including the history of American ornithology, current conservation legislation, research projects, and observations by our own members. Watch for your programs!

GENERAL NOTES REPORTS

November was colder than usual for the first three weeks, but a warm spell in the last week brought the average temperature to slightly above normal. December started as a warm month but turned cold after a few days, and with the exception of a warm week in mid-month, temperatures remained sub-normal. Snowfall was light. January was consistently cold, averaging 12° below normal in the middle of the state. There were a number of snowfalls, not very deep in most places, but little or no melting occurred. Several generalizations can be made regarding the winter birds: there are fewer than usual of the rarer winter visitants, the birds that usually frequent home feeders are down in numbers, and there are birds wintering, or whose migrations have long been deferred, which ordinarily are not seen in December and January.

Geese, Ducks. On December 26 a dozen very large Canada Geese were seen at Hamburg. Local hunters commented upon their size, and said it had been years since any that large had been seen, (EG). At Sioux City there was a flight of Canadas, Blues, and Snows on November 11, which is almost a record late date, (WY). A similar observation was made the same date at Davenport, (PP). There were 2,000 Mallards at Coralville on December 8, (FK), and those seen on the Davenport Christmas Count were still there at the end of January, (PP). For some inexplicable reason the Mallards which usually winter at the Des Moines Impounding Reservoir left early in December. There was not enough snow to prevent their feeding in the nearby fields. An estimated 5,000 were at Hamburg through January, (EG). A late Blue-winged Teal was at Lock & Dam No. 9 on November 23, (FL). Wood Ducks were reported at Cardinal Marsh on November 4, (FL), and at Sabula November 11, (PP). Two Common Goldeneyes and a Common Merganser were at Lake Amara (MG), and the latter have been at Davenport in more than normal numbers, (PP).

Hawks. Red-tailed were scarce late in the fall, and less common this winter, (PP). A Harlan's was seen at Marble Rock, (PK). Rough-legged, "scarce", (PP), and "none this winter", (DG). A Golden Eagle was seen December 21 at the Alcoa Plant by Elton Fawks. Bald Eagles were rather widely reported; Harper's Ferry, November 23, one adult, one immature, (FL), November 25 and December 8, Upper Iowa River, (DP), Des Moines Impounding November 24, Iowa City, December 10, (FK), northwest of Waterloo on December 20 by John Mitchell, (RH), and north of the Coralville area, one adult, (LS). The concentration of Mallards evidently attracted a flock of 15 seen northwest of Hamburg on January 27, and of which 11 were still there on the 30th, (EG). Three Marsh Hawks were seen at Sioux City on December 18, (WY), and five at Protivin December 2, (FL), but they have been scarce, (PP). Sparrow Hawks are "few", (EG), scarce, (WY), and "down", (PP). There have been few at Des Moines. Hawks are described by Kent as about normal.

Bobwhite. These are down according to Petersen in the only comment received.

Killdeer, Snipe. Several Killdeer have been wintering, reports coming from Decorah with several dates in December and January, (FL). Credit Island, where six were seen November 25, (PP), Sioux City, with two on November 10, (WY), and one on January 17 at Burlington, (McL). Common Snipe have also remained, one on October 28 near Decorah, (DP), two standing a -39° temperature at Decorah, (FL), and the one found on the Cedar Rapids count was still there with the Killdeer on January 6, (LS). December 8 there was one in an ice-bound creek near Iowa City, (FK).

Gulls. All gulls moved out of the Davenport area during the extreme cold, (PP). Ring-billed were along the Missouri River at Sioux City as late as November 3, and 25 Franklin's were seen November 6, (WY). A Bonaparte's was on Cedar Lake October 28, (LS).

Doves. At Davenport these are about normal, but under last year, (PP), but there have been fewer than usual at Ogden, (JK).

Owls. There has been no evidence of the Minnesota Hawk Owl invasion, but Terry Ingram saw one near Apple River, Ill., near Dubuque, (PP). There are perhaps fewer Long-eared (FK), and there has been only a report of one at Des Moines. Twenty Short-eared were seen feeding in a field December

2, (FL), and scattered observations have been made at Lamoni, (DG). The last Saw-whet banded by Petersen was on November 23.

Woodpeckers. At Marble Rock there are three Yellow-shafted Flickers coming to one feeder (PK). They are in normal numbers at Davenport (PP), with more than usual at Iowa City, where three or four are being seen per trip, (FK). A Red-shafted Flicker comes to the feeder of Mrs. Fitzhugh Diggs in the Hamburg area, (EG). Three Pileateds seen in one day at Harper's Ferry constitute a record for Leshner but he reports no Red-headed at Decorah. Neither are there any Redheads at Des Moines, although they are at Davenport as usual, (PP). An immature Yellow-bellied Sapsucker has been seen from November to January at Sioux City (WY). Yellow-shafted Flicker, Hairy and Downy, are all scarce at Ogden, (JK).

Horned Larks. Hundreds were seen January 30, (EG), and they are normal to above at Davenport, (PP).

Chickadees, Nuthatches. Several contributors have commented on the reduced numbers of Black-capped Chickadees, particularly those coming to home feeders. One pair of Red-breasted Nuthatches seen regularly at Pleasant Valley by Tom Frank, (PP).

Brown Creepers, Wrens. Creepers were relatively plentiful during December in Des Moines. A Winter Wren on October 20 at Decorah was unusually early, (DP). There were two seen December 1 at Waterloo (RH), and one at Burlington together with two Carolinas on January 17, (McL).

Mockingbirds, Robins. A Mockingbird has been wintering at Iowa City (FK), and there is "a good supply" at Lamoni, (DG). Scattered Robins have been seen at Decorah and Harper's Ferry in November (FL), four at Iowa City on January 2, (FK), and five at Burlington on January 17, (McL). A partial albino was observed by Hays on October 21.

Kinglets. Golden-crowned were seen "almost daily" (EG), and were found regularly through December in Des Moines. They arrived rather late in Sioux City, but were seen as recently as January 11, (WY).

Waxwings, Shrikes. There has been no invasion of Bohemian Waxwings and reports are confined to one in Dr. Laude's yard on December 10, and another at Davenport since the Christmas Count, (PP). Shrikes are generally very scarce around Lamoni, (DG).

Starlings. The few reports on Starlings are conflicting. Observers at Lamoni are agreed numbers are way down (DG), but an Iowa City paper carried an article about farmers' complaints concerning their numbers (FK), and there is a large roost in Des Moines.

Blackbirds. Kent considers meadowlarks to be scarce with only two observations, and they have also been scarce at Ogden (JK). and Des Moines Red-winged were seen in November and January (FL), and in December at Iowa City (FK). Wheatland (EC), Des Moines and Davenport flocks still present at the end of January (PP). Rustys were observed January 6 near Marion (LS). Brewer's were in Iowa City in large numbers but left sometime after the census (see longer note). Brown-headed Cowbirds have remained in surprising numbers, flocks being seen at Wheatland, Iowa City, and Des Moines.

Warblers. There have been an unexpected number of warbler notes. One which does not refer to the winter season, but which should go on record tells about a successful nesting at Hamburg of the Blue-winged. Five young

were brought off, (EG). An Orange-crowned was in Sioux City as late as October 27, (WY), and another was seen at Sibley the last week in December, (EG). A Magnolia was observed at Akron on October 2, (EB). Myrle Jones saw a Black-throated Blue while squirrel hunting last fall and later learned Charles Ayres had banded one the same day. Another was seen at Marble Rock November 2 and 3, (PK). Two Pine Warblers, one adult and one immature, were observed at Decorah on October 6, (DP). A Northern Waterthrush near West Union on November 18, and a Wilson's on November 25 on the Wartburg campus were seen by Arlo Raim, (RH). Myrtles are mentioned in the summary of the Christmas counts.

Sparrows, Finches. Purple Finches have not appeared in last year's numbers. Reports of a few individuals come from Waterloo (RH), Sioux City (WY), Burlington (McL), and Des Moines, although there were "large numbers" at Decorah on January 4, (DP). A Pine Grosbeak was in the yard of Mrs. Dwight Brooke in Des Moines on three days in mid-November. There has been one Common Redpoll seen on several occasions in Des Moines, but none has been mentioned elsewhere. Pine Siskins have apparently been fairly numerous with 20 seen by Dr. Laude near the Medical College at Iowa City on December 6, fairly regular observations during November and December at Sioux City, (WY), and at Hamburg, (EG). Flocks of 15 or 20 are reported from Decorah (DP) and Burlington (McL) and good flocks at Davenport, (PP). American Goldfinches are down, (PP). The only Red Crossbills mentioned are five at Sioux City early in November, (WY). A Rufous-sided Towhee, *P. e. erythrophthalmus* was seen near Marion on January 6, (LS). Mrs. Hewitt at Jesup reported a Vesper and a Swamp Sparrow the first week in January, (RH). Tree Sparrows are described as "plentiful all over" (RH), "more this year" (FK), and in good numbers at Des Moines. A Clay-colored was found October 3, and possibly the same one on November 2, (WY). Harris' were in Sioux City regularly from October through most of January, while White-throats, until early in November, and Lincoln's were common with the latter being seen until October 30, (WY). Song Sparrows are down, (PP). Lapland Longspurs appeared in a "huge flock" on October 30 and were seen almost daily until December 20, (DG). On December 16, 100 were seen (WY), 20 on January 26 (FK), and a "fair sized" flock January 30 (EG). Snow Buntings were found in a flock of 30 at Bellevue for several days in early January (MJ), and Mrs. Hewitt had 50 in November, (RH).

Contributors: Eldon Bryant, Esther Copp, Donald Gillaspey, Mrs. Edwin Getscher, Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays, Myrle L. Jones, Fred W. Kent, Jim Keenan, Jack M. McLane, Peter Petersen, Jr., Don Peterson, Lillian Serbousek, William Youngworth. WOODWARD H. BROWN, 4815 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, 12, Iowa.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher notes. One humid day in the second week of September, 1960, we were picnicking along Andros Creek in Clayton County about two miles north west of Guttenberg. A faint twitter and a flickering of white feathers in the tree tops attracted our attention. Within a few seconds a small cloud of milling gnatcatchers moved out from the top of a white oak. Apparently they were feeding on a flock of *Chironomus* midges that were traveling at tree top level. For about five minutes both birds and insects were moving about in the top branches of a dead elm; the gnatcatchers were alternately alighting and taking off from the dead limbs at such frequency that it was difficult to make an accurate count of the flock. There were at least eight and not more than eleven birds in the group. They probably represented members of two or three families that had banded together.

In all probability gnatcatchers nest in this area. Although we did not find nests in this vicinity, we did observe gnatcatchers a few miles to the south west feeding young on Backbone Ridge in Backbone State Park in early July, 1938, within full view of thousands of people whose attention was not attracted to them. In August, 1939, a delicate little cup shaped nest of hair, cobwebs and lichens was collected along Richmond Spring branch about ¼ mile north of the Backbone Park State Hatchery. It was situated in the forked branch of a very thorny wild plum at a height of about six feet above ground. This nest was retained for ten or twelve years but finally was lost during house cleaning. At any rate these observations indicate that the gnatcatcher is a nesting species along the Clayton-Delaware county border area. EMMET and EDITH POLDER, Loras College, Dubuque.

A Winter Roost of Starlings and others at Iowa City. A row of evergreens and maples along a parking lot west of the University Hospitals attracted a huge number of birds as a night roost from November through the winter. The peak numbers occurred in November and December dropping to a third by February. At dusk birds streamed in from every direction filling the sky with incoming flocks, which first lit in the bare branches of the maples so thickly as to make the trees seem fully leafed out. As it grew darker they moved down into the evergreens with the branches sagging under their numbers. A pattern of arrival found the House Sparrows coming in first while quite daylight, next the Brown-headed Cowbirds in small groups which stayed well together in a couple of trees, then (in December) a flock of Brewers Blackbirds difficult to identify at dusk but a number of observations by several observers agreed, finally flocks of Common Grackles coming in slowly by stages, and all the time hordes of Starlings enveloping the whole place. In the morning flocks went out just after daybreak (7 to 7:30) with the flight lasting for 20 minutes with birds in the sky all the time, the Starlings flying higher while the grackles more often at tree-top level and often stopping in trees. During December, before the snows, the Common Grackles fed in big flocks, though the oak ridges as they do in the fall, but later in the winter they split up in small numbers and were reported at feeding stations especially where scratch feed was available. Many of these grackles were flecked with white, not partial albinism—but "lower berth". Estimates of numbers are hazardous but from counting birds in enlarged photos of flocks in trees and in the sky a figure of 50,000 seems conservative at the peak. The composition, again estimated, would be 90% Starlings, 5% House Sparrows, and the remainder Common Grackles, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Brewers Blackbirds, possibly a few Rusty and Red-winged Blackbirds. The local paper carried a story headed "Hordes of Starlings Annoy Farmers" in which, in part, was suggested a variety of diseases carried by the birds, but consultation with a staff member of the Zoology Dept. quite discounted that possibility. F. W. KENT, 302 Richards, Iowa City.

Information Wanted on Starling and Grackle Roosts in Iowa Cities. Dr. Michael L. Furcolow, M.D., Chief, Communicable Disease Center, Kansas City Field Station, has contacted me regarding cooperation on problems of bird roosts. Gregarious birds, such as Starlings and Common Grackles, are important in the spreading of a fungus infection, histoplasmosis. The organism causing the infection is a fungus technically referred to as *Histoplasma capsulatum*, which seems to flourish in the soil which is in contact with droppings from the roosts. This would allow the infection to spread on a local basis and possibly reach epidemic stages. An epidemic of this nature occurred in Mason City, Iowa, and involved a fairly sizable number of persons. This epidemic was thought to be a result of an urban Starling roost.

Our cooperation in this matter would help Dr. Furcolow and his associates in forestalling other epidemics in Iowa cities and would allow us to show how functional a club the I.O.U. is. If you know of concentrations of such gregarious birds, please let me know and I will inform Dr. Furcolow. His office will, in turn, contact the health department of that city or get in touch with you for further information and will send proper forms. DEAN M. ROOSA, Goldfield, Iowa.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Life of Birds—Joel Carl Welty—Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., New York, 1963—cloth, pp. i-xiii+1-546, with 99 photographs, 129 line drawings, and 90 maps, charts & diagrams—\$12.95.

This book should prove to be a fine refresher course for almost any bird student, no matter how far up the ladder of knowledge he may have climbed. It will be an excellent review of everything he has read and/or learned on the subject of birds. This reviewer has made the resolve to read the entire book as time permits, because he feels that in addition to many hours of enjoyable reading, it offers the best published means of brushing up on ornithology in many years.

In the Preface the author states: "The chief aim of this book is to present, simply and straightforwardly, the basic facts of bird biology. A second aim is to arouse in the reader a lasting enthusiasm for birds and for the wonderful things they do. If the first goal is attained, reaching the second should be insured by the facts themselves. They make a fascinating story when they are considered in relation to the live, throbbing bird and its problems of existence."

We feel that Dr. Welty has made a thorough survey of all that is known about birds. His ability to write in a lucid, entertaining style while combining scientific facts and figures will at once appeal to the general reader, who has probably shied away from some ornithological treatises in the past because of their profound verbosity. Even the casual browser will find interesting reading wherever he dips in, and he will want to keep on reading. Dr. Welty is to be congratulated for having developed a skillful, lively style of writing with just enough technical terms to give clarity and continuity.

A listing of the chapter headings will show the broad scope of the work: 1, Birds as Flying Machines. 2, The Kinds of Birds. 3, Skin, Scales, Feathers and Colors. 4, Bones and Muscles. 5, Brain, Nerves, and Sense Organs. 6, Food and Digestion. 7, Blood, Air, and Heat. 8, Excretion, Reproduction, and Photoperiodism. 9, Behavior. 10, Social Behavior. 11, Songs, Calls, and Other Sounds. 12, Territory. 13, Courtship and Mating Habits. 14, Nests. 15, Eggs. 16, Incubation and Brood Parasitism. 17, The Care and Development of Young. 18, The Numbers of Birds and Their Regulation. 19, The Ecology of Birds. 20, The Geography of Birds. 21, Flight. 22, Migration and Orientation. 23, The Origin and Evolution of Birds.

In addition to covering the aspects of ornithology as given in earlier works—the physiology of birds, their behavior, migration, nesting, distribution, etc.—Dr. Welty describes the new instruments for testing bird behavior as well as the techniques of bird observation introduced in recent years, such as migration studies by radar, mist-netting and color-banding, spectrogram analyses of songs, high-speed photography, aerial surveys, and the like. Instead of adding to the multiplicity of bird literature, we believe the new book will fill a definite place and will introduce a fascinating new world of birds to many persons who had not realized its existence.

The authoritativeness of the text is unquestioned. Dr. Welty has evidently spent a lifetime of serious study of birds both in the field and laboratory. His manuscript was prepared with thoroughness and he had the counsel and criticism of a number of experts. From the mechanical angle, the book deserves further commendation. The typography is unusually pleasing, with a double-column page and a large, clear type face. The illustrations—photographs and line drawings—are well chosen and given excellent reproduction.

Iowa readers will be interested to know, and some will remember, that Dr. Welty taught at Parsons College, Fairfield, Iowa, between 1926 and 1934. He attended the IOU convention at Fairfield in 1933.—Fred J. Pierce.

Characters of Age, Sex, and Sexual Maturity in Canada Geese—Harold C. Hanson—15p. illus with 34 photographs—Illinois Natural History Survey Biological Notes No. 49, Urbana, Illinois—November 1962—single copies free of charge.

This detailed paper explains the various methods used to determine age, sex, and sexual maturity in geese (chiefly concerned with plumage characters, wing spur, and cloaca examination). All characters mentioned are illustrated clearly and a key for sexing and aging geese in fall and winter is included. It is unlikely that the average bird watcher would ever use these methods, but they demonstrate how our waterfowl research experts work and give us a greater appreciation of their problems. A person raising geese would find this paper of value in assisting him determine the sex of his birds. ed.

Life Histories of North American Birds—Birds of Prey, Shore Birds, and Wild Fowl—Arthur Cleveland Bent—reprinted by Dover Publications, Inc., New York—each 2 volumes, paperbound, 1961 and 1962—\$2.35 each volume.

Once again Dover comes to the aid of the bird student. Bent's life histories have long been considered the "final word" concerning North American birds. Most of the volumes have been long out of print and one had to pay dearly for even a tattered copy. Now they are again available in an edition printed on good quality paper with covers more durable and attractive than the original government editions. Anyone not familiar with these life histories will find they contain data on migration, courtship, nesting eggs, young, plumages, food, behavior, game pressure and wintering. Distribution is also given in detail with arrival and departure dates as well as egg dates. Bent quotes many regional field students and such passages are in smaller type than the text. Each volume includes many photographs illustrating the adults, young and nesting sites. Any one who is a really serious student of ornithology should have this series as the backbone of his library. Dover plans to reprint additional volumes, of which there are fourteen. Some of the most recent may still be obtained from the U.S. Government Printing Office. ed.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Wesley F. Kubichek, a long time I.O.U. member originally from Iowa City and former instructor at Coe College has been awarded the distinguished service award of the Department of the Interior. He retired last July after 31 years of service in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The award was presented "in recognition of his valuable contributions to fish and wildlife management, his accomplishments in the field of fish and wildlife photography, and his professional leadership."

Kubichek joined the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1919. After two and one half years he returned to Iowa, accepting a teaching position at Coe College. For the next eleven years he taught ornithology, general zoology, entomology and museum techniques. Upon his return to the Fish and Wildlife Service he became a widely known photographer, perhaps best known for his Whooping Crane film, winner of an award at the International Film Festival at Edinburgh in 1959. He now resides at Patlynn Apts., 50 and 52 Fairhope Ave., Fairhope, Alabama.

Dr. J. Harold Ennis, our hard-working librarian, will have more time for bird study this spring. Dr. Ennis is on sabbatical leave from Cornell College for the spring semester.

Your editor has recently been named regional editor for the middle-western prairie region for **Audubon Field Notes** and co-editor for the United States for **The Ring**, an international banding journal. Any material for these journals is welcomed.

The cover illustration for 1963 was drawn by E. W. Steffen of Cedar Rapids. Many of Mr. Steffen's illustrations have appeared in **Iowa Bird Life** in the past and it is hoped more will follow. The Eastern Meadowlark continues the tradition of covers depicting typical Iowa birds. ed.

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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union was organized at Ames, Iowa, February 28, 1923, for the study and protection of native birds and to promote fraternal relations among Iowa bird students.

The central design of the Union's official seal is the Eastern Goldfinch, designated State Bird of Iowa in 1933.

Publications of the Union: Mimeographed letters, 1923-1928; "The Bulletin," 1929-1930; "Iowa Bird Life," beginning 1931.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE: \$3.00 a year. Single copies 75¢ each except where supply is limited to five or fewer copies, \$1.00. Subscriptions to the magazine is included in all paid memberships, of which there are four classes, as follows: Contributing Member, \$10.00 a year; Supporting Member, \$5.00 a year; Regular Member, \$3.00 a year; Junior Member (under 16 years of age), \$1.00 a year.

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